



STATE OF CONNECTICUT • COUNTY OF TOLLAND  
INCORPORATED 1786

# TOWN OF ELLINGTON

55 MAIN STREET • P.O. BOX 187  
ELLINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06029-0187

## CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION

### MEETING MINUTES

June 21, 2006

MEMBERS PRESENT: John O'Shaughnessy, Gary Riley, Terry Shook and Joe Wehr

MEMBERS ABSENT: Charlotte Adams and Tim Olmsted

OTHERS PRESENT: Board of Selectmen: Michael Stupinski, Nancy Way, Peter Charter;  
Board of Finance: Robert Pagani; Board of Education: Dale Roberson, Dan Kuene, Maurice Blanchette, T. Littizzio; Town of Vernon: Larry Shaffer; and interested citizens

#### 1. CALL TO ORDER:

MOVED (SHOOK), SECONDED (O'SHAUGHNESSY) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO OPEN THE MEETING OF THE CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION (CRC) AT 7:05 P.M. IN THE TOWN HALL, 55 MAIN STREET, ELLINGTON, CT.

#### 2. CITIZENS FORUM:

Mr. Blanchette requested that the committee consider postponing the June 27, 2006 shared services discussion with the representatives of the Town of Mansfield due to a conflict with a Board of Education meeting.

#### 4. CONSIDER CHANGES TO TOWN CHARTER

##### a. Form of Town Government

Guest Speaker: Larry Shaffer, Town Administrator, Town of Vernon

Larry Shaffer addressed the committee and spoke about the various forms of government with which he has worked.

Strong Mayor – Alderman (Oneonta, NY)

- ♦ Mayor acted as the CEO, could hire, fire, execute contracts & spend money.

- Board of Aldermen acted as the legislative body.

## Weak Mayor – Council (Keene, NH)

- ♦ Mayor was ceremonial with no authority.
- ♦ 15 Member City Council was comprised solely of members from the other committees.
- ♦ City Manager was appointed from the council.
- ♦ All decision making occurred at the committee level and was vetted before being presented to the council.
- ♦ Budget was created from the City Council without a referendum.
- ♦ 4 year City Council staggered terms.

## Town Administrator (Durham, NH)

- ♦ 9 Member board with one elected by the board to be the chairman.
- ♦ Chairman had no additional authority beyond running the meetings.
- ♦ There were no committees; everything went directly to the Board.
- ♦ Town Administrator acted as the Chief Operating Officer.

Mr. Shaffer indicated that each form of government presented its own unique strengths and weaknesses. He indicated that the present Vernon form of government operates with components of each of the three mentioned previously.

Mr. Shaffer discussed the annual budgetary process and felt that repeated referendums took a significant amount of resources from otherwise productive endeavors. He spoke favorably of the town meeting because of its ability to bring closure to a topic, after the debate and vote.

## Questions and Answers:

Q. What is the best way to articulate how the benefits of a Town Manager system can exceed the costs incurred to the voters?

A. Experienced Town Managers should be able to cover their salary with grants received alone, due to their expertise in finding and applying for them.

Q. What is the inventory of qualified candidates?

A. There are not many young people coming into the field because to the long hours. In Vernon they had 43 applicants, 12 were interviewed of which 4 were brought back.

Q. What additional support personnel are required?

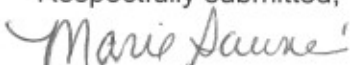
A. He felt the existing administrative staff in Ellington was sufficient to accommodate the Town Manager form of Government.

Larry felt the salary range for an experienced individual to work in Ellington should be between \$100,000 to \$110,000, plus automobile and other expenses. The candidate should have a background in rural administration. The process to advertise, interview and hire a candidate could be accomplished in 6 months.

## 6. ADJOURNMENT

MOVED (SHOOK), SECONDED (RILEY) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN THIS MEETING AT 8:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



Marie Sauve  
Per Gary Riley